new masses

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THEY'RE JAILING ANTI-FASCISTS

What are you going to do?

By RICHARD O. BOYER

THE GREEK STORY: FABLE AND FACT
by Frederick Winter

RADIO: THIS WILL KILL YOU
by Lloyd L. Brown

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just a minute

"THE issue of racial discrimination should logically have been atomized by now, what with the sheer weight of literary tracts against it." This superb sample of the blase in criticism is from the New York *Times* Sunday Book Review section. It precedes a discussion by Helen B. Parker of Millen Brand's new novel, *Albert Sears*. In the course of her review Miss Parker complains that Mr. Brand is "less concerned with psychological motivation than with real estate values" and describes the central character of his book as a "slightly schizoid ancient," because Sears is torn between a desire for profit and a sense of justice.

We've noticed similar elegant judgments in the past few months, teaching progressive writers what they may expect from quarters which have adopted the methods and standards of the Thomas-Rankin committee.

Barbara Giles' novel, *The Gentle Bush*, is a book which will some day rank high in American literary tradition for its extraordinary formal beauty as well as social penetration. The review of it in the Sunday *Times* by Nash K. Burger might have been written by a junior-high sophomore. Mr. Burger affirmed that Miss Giles was "not far removed from the earnest, moral lady novelists of yesteryear," and regretted that she described life "in terms of a somewhat unrealistic Puritan-Marxist ideology." The first statement is simply ludicrous, but the second has a whiff of the stoolpigeon about it. The intention is not just to characterize a point of view or an attitude toward history, but to sound a warning to bookshops and libraries. Of Miss Giles' Negro and white farmhands and sharecroppers Mr. Burger says, "The only error the Louisiana proletariat (*sic*) makes is in not sticking together." This sentence is not merely notable for its fancy style; it is at the same time a deliberate lie. The reviewer wishes to give the impression that Miss Giles' book is a sort of Horatio Alger version of social relations, and thereby to forestall the reader's finding out the truth: that it is one of the most subtle and complex novels of our time.

It is rumored that someone from the Sunday *Times* made telephone inquiries as to Richard Boyer's politics before *The Dark Ship* was frantically torn to pieces by one Merlyn S. Pitzele. Mr. Pitzele avers that Boyer saw in Joe Curran "a true proletarian in the classic Stalinist pattern." (No telephone calls are needed to determine Mr. P's politics.) Readers of *The Dark Ship* will realize at once what a silly lie this is. But of course the lie is not for them; it is for those who must be dissuaded from reading any book in which the labor movement comes alive and completely human.

For Edwin Berry Burgum's book of criticism, *The Novel and the World's Dilemma*, the Sunday *Times* could find no better reviewer than Diana Trilling. As an editor of *Science and Society* and occasional contributor to NEW MASSES, Mr. Burgum could expect little friendliness from Miss Trilling, whose name not inappropriately rhymes with Miss Dilling, her counterpart in less literate circles. But even so forewarned, he must have been stunned by the shameless attack launched against him, in which personal peevishness hid itself, unsuccessfully, behind noble phrases about "the subtle interplay between a writer and his culture" and a "sense of human immediacy." One would think that Burgum's book was not about literature at all, but a pamphlet on rent control (reviewed by the landlord).

All of us, readers, writers and publishers, must take heed and measure against this reactionary assault in the cultural field. We must make it our business to see that writers are treated with the respect commensurate with their quality. Newspapers are as sensitive to letters as Congressmen. Write to them whenever you see such violations of critical integrity as those in the *Times*. See that your libraries order the work of your favorite writers instead of the latest treatise on hemstitching. Spread the news of a good book by word of mouth and in your union papers. Get people to read the truth—and fight back when you see someone trying to silence it.

C. H.

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THEY'RE JAILING ANTI-FASCISTS

By RICHARD O. BOYER

WHEN a nation imprisons one of its leading novelists for fighting fascism that nation convicts itself and not the novelist. When judges jail professors, doctors and trade union leaders for the crime of helping thousands who have fought the enemies of the American people, those judges have placed their countrymen in more peril than they have placed the defendants. When Federal Judge Richmond B. Keech sentenced Dr. Edward K. Barsky, Howard Fast and nine other active anti-fascists to jail he disgraced not them but himself. As Thoreau once observed in a similar case, "Only they are guiltless who commit the crime of contempt for such a court. Covered with disgrace, the State has sat down coolly to try for their lives and liberties is the men who attempted to do its duty for it."

What kind of men and women is American democracy currently sending to prison? Professor Lyman Bradley has been guilty of spending his life explaining the beauties of European literature to students at New York University. James Lustig has been guilty of getting better pay for electrical workers. Mrs. Charlotte Stern is the educational director of an AFL union. Dr. Louis Miller is a heart specialist. Ruth Leider is an attorney and said that the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, to which all the defendants belonged, "had saved the lives of 150,000 persons." Dr. Barsky is a prominent surgeon who risked his life for weeks and months as he operated, sometimes under fire, on the Spanish wounded who were the first to fight the world menace of fascism. He is chairman of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, whose only function is to help the victims of Franco. He, and the others, were judged in contempt of the congressional Un-American Activities Committee because they refused to give it names whose owners, or whose owners' relatives, might have been executed in Spain if those names were made public.

Dr. Barsky tried to make a statement of his views when he was sentenced to six months in jail and fined $500. Although the privilege of making such a statement at such a time is a legal precedent seldom violated, Judge Keech did not hesitate to do so. The court also refused Howard Fast the right to speak when he was sentenced to three months in jail. His undelivered statement, which was written and later released to a press which did not use it, throws some light on the kind of Americans now being sent to jail.

"My work," the statement said, "with the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee has been, I think, the best kind of work men may aspire to, the highest kind—to alleviate suffering, to lessen distress, to make the sick well and the starving whole and to save life. And the very fact that this work was directed toward those earliest of gallant fighters against fascism, the Spanish Republicans, should make it all the more precious in the sight of good men. If I have erred, it was in giving too little, not too much.

"I cannot conceive of this as a crime. I cannot find anything about our committee that would make it un-American, that brings it into the scope of the Wood-Rankin Committee's investigation. Quite to the contrary, it seems to me that such work as we do expresses the best, the most generous and humanitarian qualities of the American people. . . .

"I am a writer. All my work, from the time I first set pen to paper, stands as a record of service and love for this country of mine. I am incapable—and I hope I may be incapable to the day I die—of taking any action against the United States of America which would harm her in the slightest way. . . ."

The judge, who refused Fast and Barsky the privilege of oral statements, is, of course, unimportant. One may be sure that possessed of all the rigid limitations of the law, he feels that he had done only his duty. It was not his concern to find out what the case was really all about; to determine if the Un-American Committee was in fact un-American; to determine if in truth it deserved the contempt of all Americans as a sabotager of American liberty; to inquire into the fact of its illegality; to determine whether it flouted the Constitution and ignored the Bill of Rights. To the legal mind the basic is often irrelevant. One can be sure that Judge Keech felt that determination of whether the Un-American Committee was the center of an incipient American fascism was not germane to the issues involved.

BUT the American people cannot escape the problem as easily as does the legal mind. They must find out what this case, and others like it, really mean. Failure to solve the problem will lead to serious national peril. What goes on here? Why are anti-fascists being sent to prison in democratic America? Why is the atmosphere of Washington under Truman curiously like that of Berlin under Hitler? The case of the eleven anti-fascists just convicted in Washington is part of a policy that leads to Greece and China and Berlin and back to Washington. It is part of monopoly's drive to break the labor movement and further increase already fabulous profits. It is one part of a pattern that includes the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the arrest of 5,000 Greek democrats. It is impossible to have

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American reaction abroad without having American reaction at home. When the United States approves the imprisonment of doctors and writers in Greece, it is inevitable that it will imprison doctors and writers here at home.

The case of Barsky, Fast *et al* is a part of the same drive against American civil liberties that includes the sentencing of Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the Communist Party of the United States, to a year in prison. It is a part of the same drive against the American people that includes the contempt charges against Helen Bryan, executive secretary of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, George Marshall of the Civil Rights Congress, and Richard Morford of the Council of American-Soviet Friendship. The Fast case is a part of that general drive against American liberty which also finds expression in the Taft-Hartley Law, in the indictment of two Milwaukee trade unionists, in the indictment of the anti-fascist lawyer, Josephson, and in the persecution of the gallant German anti-fascist Gerhart Eisler, as well as the harrying of thousands of government employes. So many patriots are under sentence or under threat of sentence that one recalls the statement of Thoreau that "Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also in prison."

THE conviction of the eleven is but one link in a long chain of abuses against American freedom. Hiding behind an irrational mania, reactionaries are murdering American liberty. Behind the smoke-screen of communism the Bill of Rights is being assassinated—and in the confusion, of course, prices and profits go up. So beguiled are many by the phony cry of communism that they permit the country to edge toward a disastrous fascism without a single syllable of protest. Fascism often comes through apparent legality. Hitler was voted into power. German liberties were increasingly denied to the Reds until there was no liberty for anyone. History proves that a government has never denied liberty to one group without in the end denying it to all. Behind the gigantic fiction of a Red peril, the Truman-Republican policy increasingly subverts basic Constitutional provisions. It abandons the ancient American principle of freedom of opinion, undermines free speech and freedom of assembly, destroys the right of trial in many instances, takes away the legal right of appeal in others, and threatens the freedom of the press. And all this in the name of a peril that Truman himself admitted was non-existent in a letter to former Governor Earle of Pennsylvania. Much of this subversion is contained in the Truman executive order providing for a witch-hunt and purge of government employes because of their alleged opinions or associations; more of it is contained in the so-called Federal Employes Loyalty Bill passed by the House of Representatives; and still more is contained in the Taft-Hartley law abridging the Constitutional rights of 14,000,000 American trade unionists.

How much freedom of speech or assembly have the millions of government employes now that they are faced with discharge without trial or appeal for their opinions or for "sympathetic association" with any group designated by the Attorney General as subversive? How much freedom of the press remains, for any save monopoly, now that hundreds of labor papers are forbidden by the Taft-Hartley law to oppose or favor any political candidate? Is it not apparent that the administration and its Republican allies are determined to break all opposition, control all thought, and turn every mind into a rubber stamp so that under cover of a Red scare it may work its will at home and abroad?

The American press, that paper curtain which consistently conceals from the American public the true state of affairs, must bear a large share of the blame for the present situation. If fascism comes to this country it will be the verdict of history that the press aided and abetted. It has concealed the truth, distorted the truth, evaded the truth, ignored the truth. With the very life of our nation at stake, with American liberty under attack, it has been false to its trust, even under its own restricted terms. It has given ample space to the prosecution and no space to the defense. It has accused in eight-column banners and when the accusation was refuted it had no space. It has joined the Un-American Committee in refusing to give to the public material of transcendant importance and always on the obscurantist grounds that those offering the material were Communists or friendly to Communists. It printed every form of innuendo about Gerhart Eisler, declared that he was an atom spy, and when he refuted that statement it refused to print his statement. It had a field-day on Eugene Dennis, but when he raised grave constitutional questions that affect every American and the future of our country, it printed not a word. It gave column after column to lies concerning the American Communist Party and when that party answered the lies there was not a word in the public prints. Its practices and policies have been so synchronized with those of the Un-American Committee that they are difficult to distinguish.

With American liberty under attack, the professional patriots and the press have either remained silent or have joined the attack. As in France and China, as in Italy and Yugoslavia, it is the Communist Party that is in the forefront of the fight to preserve the people's liberty. While every unctuous traducer of the Communists falls silent under the current onslaught, the American Communist Party joins other non-Communist patriots in defending the basic rights of the people. The Communist press fights daily for the Bill of Rights. Daily it indicts that mass violation of the Constitution perpetuated by the treatment of 13,000,000 American Negroes. It is Eugene Dennis who faces a year in prison for defending the American Constitution; not a banker, not Roy Howard, not Hearst.

This is not to say by any means that the Communists are the only ones to defend liberty at the risk of their persons. But it is true, I believe, that increasing numbers of Americans are learning here as others have abroad that Communists are first and foremost patriots with the welfare of their own nation their most precious concern. Increasing numbers are beginning to know that the greatest canard of all time is the gigantic, reactionary hoax that Communists are foreign agents who believe in force and violence. The reactionaries have overshot the mark. They have called too many people Communists and too many are saying, "So what? Maybe I am. If I'm one they must be in favor of good things." Almost every dissident member of the Democratic Party in the Rocky Mountain States and on the Pacific Coast has been called a Communist.

These thousands and others can secure the freedom of Eugene Dennis, of Howard Fast, of Dr. Barsky and that of the many other Americans threatened with imprisonment. These thousands can save the American Constitution. They are evidence of a new growth in American politics and it leads toward a third party. It leads toward a new party that decisively rejects Red-baiting as always and forever a tactic of reaction. Only such a party can rescue our nation from those who threaten it with fascism.

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Soap Gets In Your Ears

Do you suffer from dialerium tremens? Etheritis? Hooper-cough? Four out of every five Americans do—the fifth one doesn't have a radio.

By LLOYD L. BROWN

I was in one hell of a shape when my wife and kids got back that night. The house wasn't torn up like Ray Milland's was, the floor lamps were upright and the furniture was all intact. The half-full bottle of Christmas brandy was unmolested and the bay rum they gave me for Father's Day was still in the medicine cabinet —and still unopened. But me—well, all I can say is: never again.

That day—my Lost Week-Day—started on the morning of Wednesday, July 9. After breakfast—and after my wife, who knew what was coming, had fled with the children to the Bronx—I got out a large notebook and a bunch of sharpened pencils, turned on the radio, set the dial at 660 and leaned back in the armchair. The clock said 8:30 and it was more than twelve hours before they returned.

It wasn't my idea. Some time back the editors of NEW MASSES were kicking around ideas for future articles when one of them suggested that it might be a good thing for somebody to put in a day listening to the radio and write a report on what he heard. I volunteered. That was my greatest mistake since that first day at Fort Meade when I answered the sergeant's call for volunteers for special duty—and spent the next two days shoveling stuff.

My plan of operation was a simple one: to pick one station and let the soap chips fall where they may. The choice was WNBC, which boasts of being the first station of the National Broadcasting Company. NBC is not the largest of the networks, but it claims to have the widest population coverage of any. There must be better stations and there may be worse, but my idea was to heed the advice of the Ex-Lax song to "pick the happy medium in everything you do."

FIRST came "Hi Jinx," one of those husband-and-wife things which start your day off right. (But before you hastily turn the page to something else let me say right here that I'm not going to report all I heard. After all, *you* didn't volunteer.) This show, which features Jinx Falkenburg and Tex McCrary, is sponsored by TWA. Jinx, a gushy gal who does most of the talking, interviewed her brother Bob, a tennis player recently returned from the Wimbledon tournament. A genial lad, full of chuckles at this early hour, he reported that one of the players was an Austrian who had lost an arm in the war. "Wasn't there any resentment against him?" his sister asked. "Oh no," Bob chortled. "You see he only fought against the Russians — now if he had fought against us Americans or the British I guess it would have been different. But you see he fought against the Russians . . . hah!" There was some more about did you shake the hand of Queen Mary? Gosh how exciting! This was a half hour.

Next, what they call an audience participation show, "Honeymoon in New York." I quote verbatim from the Remarks Column on my note paper: "Thirty minutes of titters and titillation . . . Gobs of oh gollys. Approx. 24 commercials."

That last remark reminds me that it was here in the first hour that one of my plans proved a washout. I was going to keep a careful tab on the number and frequency of commercials, with special reference to the singing type which are so popular. I couldn't do it. My frantic efforts to record these statistics was like hunting jackrabbits in the tall-grass Kansas prairie. They spring up at you from all sides and while you're trying to draw a bead on one leaping up ahead, a half-dozen more flash across from both sides. I bagged about 350 of the galloping ads but Lord knows how many got away.

Skipping the 9:30 Jim Fleming Show (I'm going to skip like I promised), "Katie's Daughter" was brought on at ten by Sweetheart Soap—my first taste of what the day was to provide in abundance. This was number one of exactly twenty fifteen-minute real-life dramas provided its listeners that day by WNBC, which Brings You the World's Best Entertainment *Free*.

It seems that Katie runs a hamburger joint on the waterfront while her daughter, who married rich, lives on Park Avenue. It's a story that asks the question: should a mother sacrifice everything so that her daughter can have all the things which she never had? This is an important question and one worth repeating. Which it was —exactly twelve dramas later in "Stella Dallas," a story that asks the question: should a mother sacrifice everything, etc.

Jack Kilty, Songs, and then "Road of Life," drama of a woman doctor brought to you by Duz. Before the spell was broken Dreft came right up with "Joyce Jordan, MD" and her struggle to be both a doctor and a woman. The commercial goes like this: "It starts with a D and ends with a T—that's *Dreft*!" Just thought you'd like to know, too.

Fred Waring's orchestra spread a half-hour of velvety smooth lather and then Jack Berch brought on a quarter-hour of recorded tunes and banter. Songs like "Jeepers Creepers Where'd You Get Those Peepers," and witty announcements of others like "Five foot two, eyes of *black* and blue . . . haw! haw! haw!"

At 11:45 Babo presented "Lora Lawton," and what it means to be the wife of one of the richest, most handsome men in America. This vital problem was to be explored further in several other dramas. NBC will not be outdone by CBS, which has "Our Gal Sunday"—the story that asks the question: can this little orphan girl from a little mining town in the West find happiness as the wife of England's richest, most handsome lord?

THE noon news brought us back to the real world's real-life dramas with a breathless shortwave flash from London: Elizabeth is engaged to

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Philip, "the man who gave up his claim to the royal throne of Greece and his nationality and religion to win the hand of England's loveliest maid."

Norman Brokenshire (a warm-hearted old codger who reminds you of Lionel Barrymore in that picture) then brings you household hints, a bit of philosophy, a bit of a chat, a recording of one of his favorites, "I Wonder What's Become of Sally," Alligator cigarettes ("the tobacco is *air-washed*!") and this striking bit of merchandising: "Vell, vell, look what's coming . . . VEL, spelled V-E-L, the wonder soap. Housewives say it's mar-VELous!"

At the station break before Dif brought on Mary Margaret McBride I was reminded that American radio is charged by act of Congress with operating "in the public interest, convenience and necessity" by a thirty-second announcement that asked women to enroll in nurses' training courses because of the shortage in that profession. During the rest of the day there were three more announcements in the public interest for a total of one and one-half minutes of the 720 minutes I listened.

Billed as the "Merchant of Miracles," Bob (Believe-It-Or-Not) Ripley's stuff sounded pretty tame after all I'd heard before of the wonders that Duz does.

At 2 P.M. "an hour of good listening" was promised. It wasn't that I was skeptical, but I had to take time out to scrounge around in the ice-box for something to eat and so I missed "Today's Children," "Woman in White," "Masquerade" and most of "Light of the World," which came up in that order. The latter is Bible stories according to General Mills, makers of Cheerios.

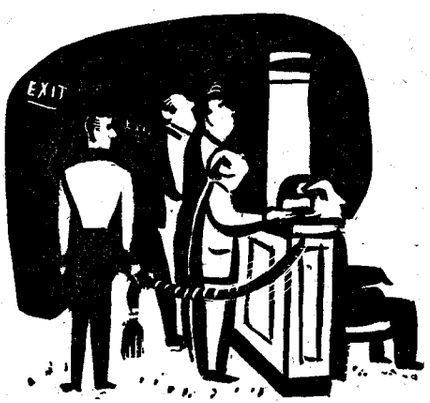
Somewhere along here when I had almost lost heart, my unkind thoughts about some people and their bright ideas were banished by Spic and Span's announcement that "sometimes one must suffer in order to know that 'Life Can Be Beautiful.'" But a line in the very next drama, "Oxydol's own Ma Perkins," dropped me right down again: "Gosh, Ma, is it all worth it?"

Pepper Young's Family had their troubles too. This was offered by Camay, "the soap of beautiful women." I know that because the phrase was repeated eight times in the fifteen minutes. Anyway this family's factory was in danger of being taken over by that scoundrel Trent. That's bad because he threatens to fire all the old loyal workers whom he calls "dead wood," and that must never happen to them or to the town of Elmwood. But Pepper and his wife have each other and they love each other too. HE: "You're such a peach!" SHE: "You're such a peach!"

"Right to Happiness" was introduced as "ninety-nine and forty-four one-hundredths pure entertainment" by guess who. Something about an accident and a hospital emergency ward and somebody was delirious. I wasn't feeling too good myself by now.

AT 4 P.M. the soapmakers called it a day and yielded to Groceries, Toilet Articles and Sundries. Energine Cleaning Fluid was up with "Backstage Wife," the story of a little Iowa girl who married America's most handsome actor and what it means to be the wife of a famous Broadway star.

Then "Stella Dallas," sponsored by Phillip's Milk of Magnesia. (See "Katie's Daughter" above.) And "Lorenzo Jones" by Bayer Aspirin. And "Young Widder Brown," by



Phillip's Milk of Magnesia Tooth Paste, which they said was about the age-old conflict between a mother's duty and a woman's heart. "When a Girl Marries" (Instant Sanka) was the story of anyone who has ever been in love and "Portia Faces Life," with Post's Raisin Bran, was a story taken from every woman's heart.

Then came a "real-life story of people just like people we all know" whom you meet in "Just Plain Bill" through the thoughtfulness of Anacin. And then a horrible thought: could it be that these makers of headache cures are deliberately—but no, you can't allow yourself to think things like that.

"Front Page Farrell" by Freezone, and then the six o'clock news. The New York *Sun's* exclusive big atom bomb steal, Philip and Elizabeth, a Japanese prince wins a spelling bee and the price of beef and pork goes up in Chicago. . . . But still it sounded good.

"Serenade to America" with H. Leopold Spitalny at 6:15 made me realize that I hadn't heard anything that passed for music for six straight hours, not to speak of that organ which brings on each drama. Not even a Tchaikovsky concerto from the movie *Carnegie Hall*.

Bill Stern came in with five minutes of sports chatter. There were no scores to announce so he told about a young Greek who had gone to England to school where he played some football. And now this former Rugby star had won the hand of England's future queen.

Lowell Thomas gave that news a big play too, and carefully explained the difference between an heir apparent and an heir presumptive. Which was educational in a way. I'll skip H. V. Kaltenborn like I always do and take you to 8 P.M. and Washington, D. C. where Joseph W. Martin, Speaker of the House, had been substituted for "Gramps, a Comedy" which was scheduled. Rep. Martin made a strong indictment of those who are undermining the people's confidence in Congress.

At 9 P.M. came the Tex and Jinx Show. At that stage of the game it took a few moments before I realized that they were back again and that this was where I had come in that morning. Now Jinx was interviewing Hollywood's James Stewart . . . "Oh Jimmy—Jimmy *Stewart*!"

Oh God! The knob twisted off in my hand.

I'M MUCH better now and I can even look our table-model Motorola in the dial again without getting that feeling. And now that I think back on that day I can calmly set down some of the things I learned — the things you too can learn if you'll only listen.

1. Don't waste any sympathy on the hard-working housewife. What with all the miracle soaps, miracle soap-substitutes and miracle soap-aids, all the smart woman need do is take a damp rag and whizz! presto! whee! zoom! swoosh! and the floors, walls, stove, tile, children, laundry, curtains —the whole house—is gleaming like new. Also her hands, teeth, hair and

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eyes. In a matter of seconds she can be all through and spend the rest of the day listening to her radio.

2. There are many problems to life. As one character on "Ma Perkins" said, "if it's not one trouble it's another." These problems are, unlike dirt and grease, quite insoluble. Which is a good thing for program continuity and the jobs of the nation's script-writers—both of them.

3. These real-life problems are operations, accidents and misunderstandings. There are no such things as high prices, rent increases, anti-labor bills or housing shortages which exist only in the unreal world on this side of the loudspeaker.

4. NBC is good for children. They don't seem to have any of those children's programs for children. At least none were scheduled that day.

5. In case you want to start a radio station of your own you'll be pleased to know that you won't need to hire much help. You can put on a score of real-life dramas with only three people and if you want to cut down you can make out with two by keeping one of your characters unconscious in a hospital. For music you'll need only one organ recording and a couple of old records like "Dardanella" and "My Gal Sal," which you can make into revivals, and you can get your uncle —the one who chuckles—to put in a few words between numbers. Don't forget audience-participation: your cast is free and you can even sell them tickets to get in. And don't worry; if the people think your programs are smelling up the airwaves all you have to do is tell them that's what the people want.

6. If you're a private citizen and you don't like the standard brand of culture dished out to you by General Mills, General Motors and General Foods, please remember that the broadcasters are making money and that's what radio is for. Besides there's nothing you can do about it. Nothing, that is, by fiddling with the dial and saying tsk tsk. Of course you can get together with other people and do a whole lot of things to change the set-up. Like boycotting the sponsors, flooding the stations with demands for decent programs and reminding the boys in Washington that the airwaves belong to us, the people — spelled P-E-O-P-L-E—and not to Proctor & Gamble. But that's collective action and that's bad—for the hucksters.

7. Never volunteer to listen to the radio all day.

GREEK FABLES AND FACTS

What did the report of the UN investigating commission disclose? A look at the evidence.

By FREDERICK WINTER

Lake Success.

THE game in Greece has strange rules. One must understand them before reading the three tightly-packed volumes of testimony given before the recently-returned United Nations Balkan Investigating Commission and the widely divergent conclusions that were reached.

The puzzle is this: After hearing countless witnesses on both sides and carefully studying the scene of the crime, the jurymen disagreed not only as to the identity of the criminal, but as to who is the victim and what is the crime. There is confusion as to whether a second-story thief is breaking into the house or a strangler is garroting the owner down in the cellar. To some it is clear that whatever crime is being committed the only way to stop it is to arrest the owner of the house or else blow the house up. Others advocate another remedy.

Needless to say, this is not nonsense, nor are all the jurymen merely whimsical. It all adds up if you know the rules.

The Greek case was opened under unusual circumstances, to begin with. The world press, not excluding the Athens newspapers, had carried reports of intensive fighting in the hills and in the central plains of Greece for some time when Greece first called the situation to the attention of the Security Council. But oddly enough, though all observers reported murder, riot and arson raging within the house, the monarcho-fascist Greek government called for investigation of a burglary which it said was taking place on its second-story veranda. It complained specifically that Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania were fomenting border disorders, and sheltering and arming guerrillas. It did not call attention to the large-scale Partisan warfare raging throughout central and northern Greece and the Greek isles far from the nation's borders. It naturally would not call attention to the reign of terror within the country and for which it was responsible.

In due course the UN dispatched an investigating commission composed of delegates from eleven nations, along with liaison representatives from each of the countries concerned and a staff of one hundred secretariat employes. Throughout that investigation the British and Americans kept their eyes glued on the second-story veranda, but dismissed as irrelevant the efforts on the part of some delegates and many witnesses to point out the murder within the house.

Much of the testimony borders on the fantastic. Typical of those who testified on behalf of the dollar-ruled Greek government was a man referred to in the records only as Valtadoros. After his testimony, he admitted under cross-questioning that previous to his appearance before the commission he had been sentenced to death by the Athens regime. Said he: "I am unable to explain why I have not yet been executed. I think they wanted to keep me so that I might make statements to you today against neighboring countries." How he came to change his opinions concerning the Athens government was revealed in yet another meaningful quotation from his testimony: "In the prison of Ardea I was tied up from the tenth to the eighteenth of August."

Other prisoners were put on the stand. Two of them, referred to as Zervas and Petsos, told the commission that they had personally witnessed the torture to which Valtadoros was subjected before he agreed to testify that Yugoslavia was aiding the guerrillas. Still others declared: "Every member of the resistance movement

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who was arrested was beaten till the blood flowed." One said: "Several others who spat blood were beaten in my presence." The persecution had its effect. Valtadoros testified at great length while four others arrested with him were executed during the commission's hearing.

Another witness whose statement was soberly entered into the record was Colonel Ivan Gologanov, who, during the German occupation of Bulgaria, was president of the field court-martial at Plevna. For his work in sentencing Bulgarian anti-fascists to death Gologanov was honored by the Nazis. Another star witness was Vlahos Christos, who was heard at the insistence of the Greek liaison representative. Christos is generally known to have murdered the EAM Minister Zegvos in the streets of Salonika last March.

One item offered as evidence by the Athens government was a soldier's forage cap found at the scene of an engagement between government troops and guerrillas. It was exhibited as part of an Albanian uniform and clear evidence of "foreign intervention." There was the cap with a star on it just as the Albanian army regulations prescribe, but it must have seriously discomfited someone when it was pointed out that this star had six points whereas the Albanians use a five-pointed star. Still, members of the commission found it a telling point against the Albanians. None of the flaws in its class-A exhibits nor in the testimony of its star witnesses were denied by the Greek government or contested by British or American delegates. They were merely ignored.

THE case against the Greek government was presented in great detail, listing the towns which its gendarmarie had attacked, the numbers arrested, the instances of torture, pillage, burnings and massacres. The testimony was given by officials of the Greek Socialist Party and the Left Liberal Party as well as by many others. Bitter and doubly meaningful were the words of representative Paparigas of the Greek General Confederation of Labor: "If every regime is characterized by its attitude toward the trade unions, the present regime in Greece, which has destroyed the liberties of the trade unions and is carrying out a system of unbridled terrorism against the working class, must undoubtedly be characterized as a fascist regime. This regime receives no support whatever from the people, the working class. It is the regime of a reactionary clique, imposed upon the country and maintained in power thanks to foreign intervention and support."

To all such testimony the Greek government answered: "The question before your commission is that of the relations between Greece and her three northern neighbors. It is *not* [the Greek representative's emphasis] either the domestic policy or the political complexion of any one of the four governments concerned. . . ."

Whereupon the Anglo-American majority considering the charge of terrorism against the Greek government summed up by saying: "Accordingly the Greek government did not on these grounds present evidence in refutation and in consequence the evidence before the commission was inevitably one-sided."

One Evangelos Kostudis stood before the commission and declared: "All the arms which we surrendered immediately came into the hands of those who had collaborated with the enemy during the occupation. These arms with which we had fought the Germans were given to murderers and oppressors, who used them against us. The terrorism which then began in our district was no different from the terrorism of the Germans and collaborators during the occupation."

That charge drew two replies. To the accusation that collaborators were functioning in the Greek government and military apparatus, the Athens spokesman said that the Communists in Greece "are now skillfully and cunningly exploiting the question of collaborationism." Throughout the report no denial was entered.

When it was charged that Macedonian and Albanian minorities were oppressed by the Greek government, that their schools had been closed, their towns attacked, their citizens jailed and their language forbidden, the Greek government produced Macedonian and Albanian witnesses who testified that they were allowed to speak their own language—in prison.

True, the three accused powers confess to certain "crimes." They admit to hospitalizing some of the wounded among the refugee Greeks that stream from their native land. More than 20,000 Greeks have fled to Yugoslavia, around 5,000 to Bulgaria and 23,000 to Albania.

For such crimes the Anglo-American bloc proposed to brand Greece's three northern neighbors with heavy guilt and place upon them the responsibility for Greece's "unpleasantness." In cold print they deny that a civil war fomented by the government exists in Greece. That fiction is useful, even necessary, because under it American dollars and American arms can be utilized without the charge of intervening in the internal affairs of that country. And to firmly establish the fiction the American and British representatives propose to plant a permanent control commission.

The other solution, proposed by the USSR and Poland in the light of

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the evidence, would proclaim that the Greek government is responsible for the disorder in its house, and would end that disorder by two steps: first, all "foreign troops and foreign military personnel would be withdrawn" and, second, the UN would set up a special commission "which through the proper supervision would guarantee the use of . . . aid [that is, foreign economic aid] only in the interests of the Greek people."

The Greek case is, of course, so transparent that the French and Colombian representatives on the Security Council, despite the great pressure being brought to bear on them by the United States, have offered a compromise resolution. Here at Lake Success the American spokesmen are contriving a synthetic hysteria over the issue. Everyone knows that the matter at hand is serious but everyone also knows that the Athens regime is resorting to fraud and downright falsehood in order to save its neck. It speaks of "plots" and "invaders" and of "international brigades" in order to justify the terror and banditry which it is imposing on the Greek people and their progressive and liberal leaders. Were it not for the aid Washington is giving the Athens camarilla of black marketeers, the present Greek government could not survive the week. Alert correspondents are making pertinent comparisons between the scene in China and that in Greece. In both instances they see police states operating which can continue to exist only by destroying all dissidents, whether they be Communists or non-Communists.

But more, many in the Security Council press gallery—men and women from all over the world—wonder at the brazenness of the American representatives who act as though Greece were an American colony. And everyone with a grain of perception knows that this attitude is possible only because the present rulers of Greece are willing to sell themselves to Washington for the simple reason that they have no other future than that of clerks for the big money. But as in China, the Truman policy can hardly succeed. For one, the peoples of the Mediterranean area are too far advanced for an easy enslavement, and for another American imperialism, for all its strength, is not strong enough to set the clock moving backward. The clock cannot even be stopped. That accounts for the frenzy with which the State Department's emissaries are behaving and for their sanctioning of Athens' butchery of those who cannot be bought. The defense of Greek independence and democracy should win the widest American support because in the end Americans will pay dearly for the folly of the Truman Doctrine.

Loretta

Maybe I am too much of a lady, Loretta thought angrily. An eye for an eye is wrong—but they force it on me, she told herself at last.

A Short Story by EDITH ANDERSON

THERE was a young lady, but she was Jewish. Otherwise she looked quite an American young lady. She dressed in the very best taste, the kind that is expensive but not loud, and she did not earn much money, but when people saw her clothes they did not feel sorry. They said, sometimes sourly, "My, you always look nice." Of course she quite often wore slacks and a shirt and a jacket. She wore her hair in a debutante fashion, a long bob with curling ends. Her nose was short and straight, her mouth pretty, a short upper lip and a full lower one, and her eyes were blue and large and possibly Jewish, but only if someone told you and then you would have to look at them and think they were Jewish after first thinking it over, but no one ever thought it over unless they were told.

She looked so American and particularly so New York, sophisticated, pretty, not terribly outstanding, but really very lovely eyes, that wherever she went people were friendly to her and almost every day someone said to her "Oh, but he's a Jew, you know," or "It used to be a lovely neighborhood, but now of course the Jews have ruined it" or "I bought it from one of those Jew shops on Third Avenue" and of course many much less refined remarks, and all of them struck at her lightly, like shuttlecocks, but with a contact that pricked as if the shuttlecocks were edged with thorns.

Because her nose was short and straight, that was the trouble, she did not know what to do. She felt as if she had deceived the people. They trusted her. They thought she was not Jewish. Her nose had lied to them. Now they trustingly said, as if they were among Christians, "In a way Hitler was right," and often they got quite angry about the Jews, while Loretta, the Jewish young lady, stood helplessly polite not knowing how to say "Please stop—you are trusting me and it is quite indecent of me to let you say those things, for if you knew I was Jewish you would not say them, but I do not dare stop you now, for I know you will be horribly embarrassed." She had tried everything and was very tired of trying to find ways to change people's minds or at least to stop them from saying "Jew Jew Jew Jew Jew Jew Jew" all the time. She could not understand why "Jew" was such a popular subject. People did not every day mention their mothers or sweethearts or hobbies or delights or Presbyterians or Englishmen, but they did every day mention "Jew." It was exactly as important, and as unimportant and taken-for-granted a topic as the weather.

She tried to understand the people who cried "Jew" all the time. She said to herself, "It isn't their fault, they are told that, they don't really know Jews." She found that although she had never been very interested in being Jewish, as a special thing, every day she was made to think of it. Whenever someone said "It's a lovely hotel—no Jews" she was made to think "Oh but *I* am a Jew." But then, she thought, is this not an awfully egotistical way for me to think—what if I *am* a Jew? This bright well-mean-

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ing chattering little person does not mean me. But wouldn't she if she knew? But being a kind person, Loretta did not hurt the chatterer's feelings by saying "*I* am a Jew." She thought it, that was all.

WHEN Loretta was fifteen she determined to change everyone's mind and became involved in quite painful conversations. A man on a steamboat to Nantucket said he was from Springfield and that Springfield was getting so overrun with Jews that he could hardly bear to stay there, and it was his own home town. So Loretta gathered up her strength and kept from yelling angrily and said very nicely to the man, "But after all Jews are people just like everyone else," a line she soon learned to drop for it did not work, they just said no there were two kinds, the dirty, greasy, cheating, lying, pushing, aggressive, tribal type, and the fine kind, but they were in the minority, it was very sad for them, the other Jews spoiled it for them, they were so pushing and ruthless and greasy and hypocritical. Then Loretta said to the man, "Have you any Jewish friends?" And the man said yes, and she learned to drop that line too, they all had Jewish friends but hated Jews, it was no use.

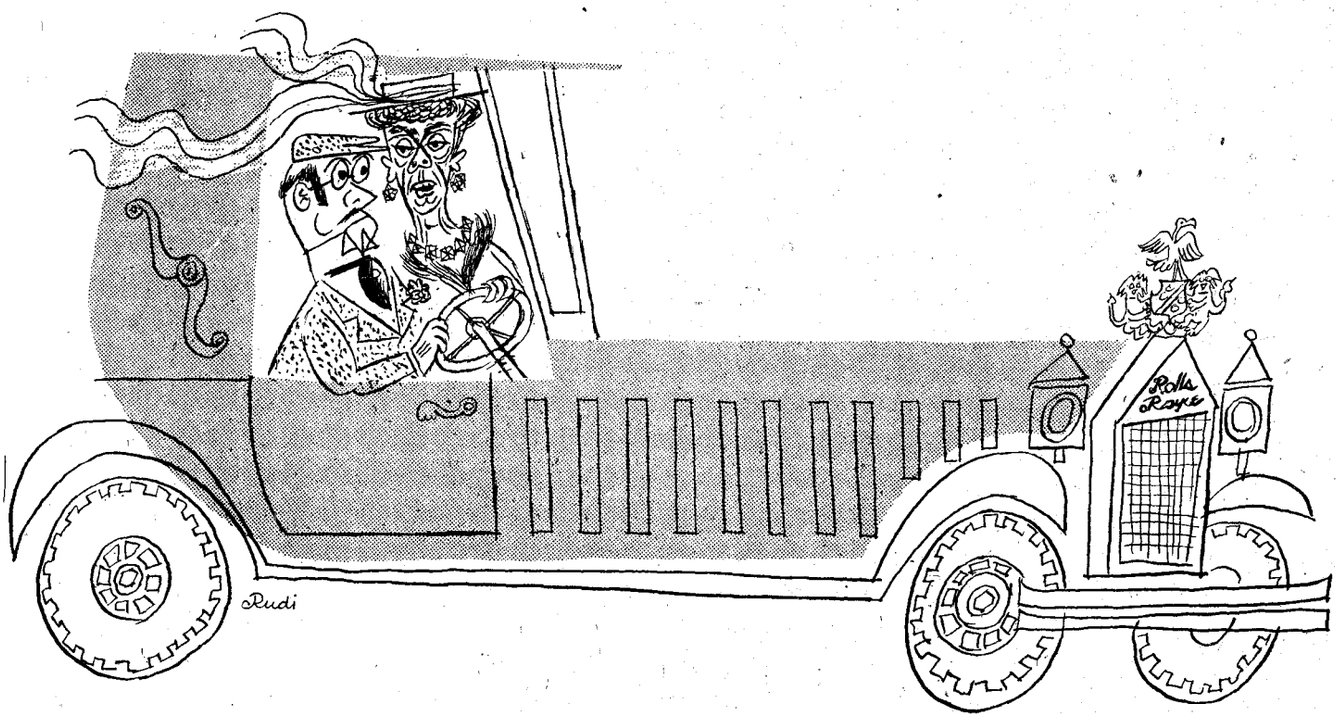
One year Loretta had a job in a summer camp where a man with a red face sprawling on a lawn said to three fat women in white, "Put them all on a raft and set it afloat and let it get lost, that's the thing to do with them. Hitler isn't fast enough."

Not long after, she got engaged to a newspaper man, a very witty man, and his mother was extremely charming to Loretta, but she told her son Jews were all right as friends but you couldn't marry one, and so he didn't.

Loretta's kitchen window got stuck and the middle-aged lady across the areaway called to her in a musical lovely voice, very low and cultured, "Why not try Slip-it? I'll lend you mine!" and she smiled ever so sweetly. Loretta thanked her, borrowed the Slip-it with a little brush, dabbed the window chains, and returned it the next day with a large slab of chocolate birthday cake and a thank-you note in a cardboard box on the lady's window sill. The next day, the lady called musically across the shaft, "Helloo-ooh!" and when Loretta came to the window, rather wishing the lady would not disturb her, the lady asked if the landlord had painted her apartment, and Loretta said no, had he painted yours, and the lady said most of it but not the back room, and Loretta said if you've been here three years he's obligated to, it's the law, and the lady said, "I know, but I never argue with a Jew. It's beneath me."

When Loretta was completely grown-up she did not try to change people's minds very often but she felt very Jewish. A nice boy-friend of hers who was a Christian tried to reason with her intelligently, he said, "Why fuss so? What makes you Jewish any more than me?" "Born that way," she said, and he was irritated; he said "Born how? Is it your blood or what? You say you aren't religious, so how are you Jewish?" and Loretta after a while said "I guess I am Jewish because everybody else cares so much, I guess because when they say *Jew* I feel a kind of pain and I say, they mean *me*—and then because of gas-chambers and Belsen; those people were merely born, that's all, they were born, and they were born Jewish, so everyone believes, and so they are. And might I not have died in Belsen, and might I not still die here? I am not very deep, darling, I am not very intellectual, but I do know I am a Jew, for they tell me Jew Jew Jew and I say to myself, they mean *me*. That's how I am a Jew."

She also told him an incident she was ashamed of when she was only five, she was sitting on a place that was square and hot next to a church, the sun had made the hot yellow square and she sat on it and squeezed her shoulders against the warm stone of the church wall, when two other girls came over, older girls, and one of them said, "Are you a Jew?" Loretta was not sure, she thought she was, they had told her so at home, really she was sure, yes she knew she was; but the girls had small eyes and sharp teeth and she said "No." "Oh," the girls said, smiling, "that's all right, we thought you was a Jew and we



"And you'll also be quite shocked, Count, to see the spread of foreign ideas over here."

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was going to chase you away," and Loretta smiled too until they went away and then she thought, "This is not good, being a Jew."

She got a job where every day the other young ladies encountered Jews—she encountered them too but did not really, really and truly, in all conscientiousness, did not really see how the Jews were any worse than the Christians, and when she became friendly with the other young ladies she started a new policy of telling everyone before they could say anything that she was Jewish. Even if they said anything she quickly and very gently told them, because she was so tired of hearing it and she thought, "Let them have some consideration for me, they do like me, so let them consider me, I am tired, I want to be made comfortable."

And one day she told a girl all about ghettoes and what they did to the Jews. The girl seemed very impressed and never said another word about Jews in Loretta's presence, but one day she made a mistake and said, "Today I had a customer who was one of those you know how there are objectionable people of all races and nationalities, objectionable low-type Irish"—the girl herself was Irish—"low-type Italian, low-type Greeks, of course there are high-type too, but this man was so greasy, his skin was heavy, it made you sick to look at it, you know what I mean, you don't like that type yourself," and after all that, Loretta suddenly realized that the girl was talking about a Jew. It made Loretta feel very, very tired and she could not even smile, she stared ahead of her and felt that her face was turning into a piece of leather.

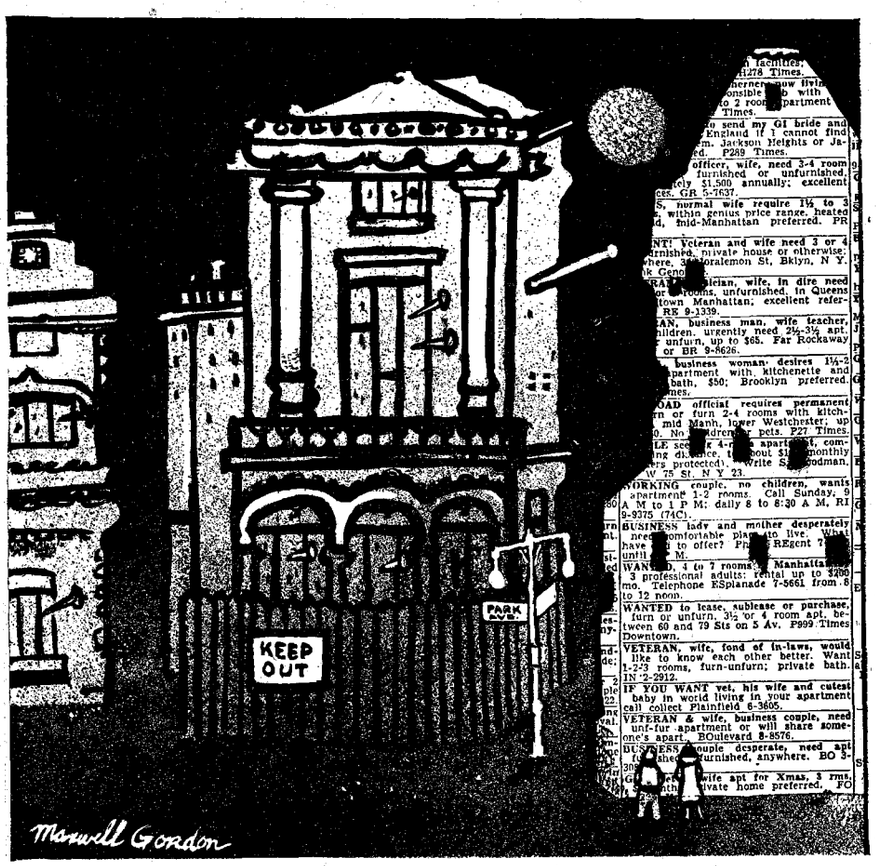
Then one day after not hearing about Jew Jew Jew for a while she opened an autobiography of a writer whose work she admired and found a part that went, "He looks like a Jew. . . . He is worse than that, says Alfy," and she felt almost sick, wasn't the author a Jew, and whatever she was, wasn't it awfully small? Loretta overlooked this weakness, however, and kept reading, for she enjoyed the writer, just as she had had to forgive Theodore Dreiser and Henry James and really practically all of them. "Maybe I am getting supersensitive," thought Loretta.

The next day she went to a gray little warehouse she had read about in a food column and bought, from the German refugee who ran the place, a tin of small green peas, and another tin of vichyssoise, remarking to the man that if he was interested in choice food he should visit an old lady around the corner who made wonderful jams and jellies. The man said he must look into it. Then Loretta ran to the old lady, a favorite of hers, to tell her about the new business she might get. "The man really seemed so interested!" Loretta cried, "you may become rich!" and she laughed and felt quite conspiratorial.

The old lady was small and New Englandy, she was shaped like a cocoon, she wore blue faded gingham, and she loved good food with a profane passion. She put mushrooms up in sherry and said, "Let them age, my child, let them age! Then they'll be out of this world!" She put up strawberries in rum, sherry jelly in cognac, and of her specialty lemon butter she said "*I* wouldn't eat it!" but despite this distaste sold it to a great many people who maybe disliked it too, but bought it because the old lady said she didn't like it and they were charmed. But the old lady said to Loretta, "No use, no use, my child! I haven't any sugar, the OPA has taken it all, and I can only sit and wait."

"Well, what shall I buy today?" asked Loretta, who didn't need anything. "You want something exotic, I suppose," said the old lady, who was fond of the word "exotic," and she handed Loretta a small jar of rum butter. "Smell it," she commanded, and Loretta smelled it, and it smelled exciting, and the old lady let her taste the rum it was made from, very fine and light with a sharp loveliness to it, and when Loretta heard that the rum butter was eighteen cents she said, "You should charge more. You could get it," but the old lady said no, that was all she'd charge. Then she said, "Who did you say this man was who might come to buy?" and Loretta explained. The old lady got very angry and stood up like a small general and shouted in a small shout, "I know who they are! They are refugees, they come in here to this country and they buy things in cans and take the labels off and put their own labels on and drive around in a big car and sell to Jews, it's a *money* business." she shouted in as loud a shout as she could produce, "nothing but a *money* business. Refugees! Why don't they go to Palesteen!"

Loretta felt very tired this time, she was holding a bag containing the old lady's rum butter and some tomato jam, and she said without hope at all,



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but because the words seemed to be there to come out, "They can't get into Palestine." "They certainly can!" shouted the little gingham creature, "and then they drop bombs! They deserve what they get! They have a tribal fault!" Loretta said very gently, "I don't agree. I am sorry for refugees. It must be terrible to be forced from one's own home and to—" "Deservedly!" "Well," said Loretta, "I cannot agree," and the old lady said, "I don't care if you do or not, that's my opinion and I love America and its traditions and its soil and its chemistry and I can only say, you have not thought deeply about Jews." "Yes, I have thought deeply about Jews," said Loretta, "more than you think." "No, you cannot have," cried the old lady firmly and Loretta felt a thing like a rock that the mortar has dried up on and the rock tumbles out of the wall, and she said in the tumble, "I have; as a Jew I could not help it"—"Oh, I did not know you were a Jew"—"Of course not, that is not the point"—"But," said the old lady, "I still maintain that Jews have a tribal fault and deserve their trouble, why are they all Communists, I hate and despise Communists, how do you feel about Communists?" and Loretta leaning against the glass case behind which the old lady was wrinkling her forehead said, "It is hard for me to hate and despise, it is not in me," and the old lady said, "It is in me! Yes, it is in me!" and so Loretta said, "I am quite tired, I must go home and rest," and politely left.

When she came home she put a knife in the rum butter and took up a taste of it and licked it off. It tasted quite beautiful, quite out of this world. "She thinks," thought Loretta, "I am sure, that I told her she should charge more than eighteen cents because a Jew would think of a thing like that."

Her heart trembled with outrage. Maybe I am too much of a lady, Loretta thought. Was do unto others as you would have others do unto you thought up by a Jew? It is certainly no use to a Jew. Better an eye for an eye. No, that is wrong, Loretta thought quickly. "But they force it on me" she cried inwardly, and finding that she was standing and leaning forward and that her teeth were clenched and that the rum butter knife was held so tightly in her hand that the knuckles were white, she let everything go and the knife clattered to the floor and she said with her lips, "Just don't say that around me!"

BRASS-HAT MIKADO

A report on the labor movement in Japan. How the Truman Doctrine is applied by its Eastern apostle.

By DAVID ARNOLD

This is the second and concluding installment of Mr. Arnold's article. The first appeared last week.

IN ADDITION to leaving the fascists in power, MacArthur has attempted to keep them in power. After the war ended, the resentment of the Japanese people against the militarists and the monopolists erupted like a volcano. MacArthur has attempted to head off this movement, to control it, and, at times, to break its back.

On the surface, at least, MacArthur has adhered to the principle of freedom of speech and press. The Communists are graciously allowed to have their own newspaper, *Red Banner*; its circulation has simply never been permitted to increase beyond a certain point. There is a Japanese committee which controls the allocation of newsprint. During the early months of the occupation it was a relatively liberal board. Maneuvering behind the scenes, MacArthur's headquarters succeeded in kicking out the liberals and replacing them with "men of sound judgment," as they are usually called in GHQ.

Censorship has been ruthless. When one of the Japanese motion picture companies produced a documentary film entitled *The First Year of the Occupation*, the censors cut all scenes showing large groups of people. Such scenes, according to GHQ, were "incendiary." Another documentary, entitled *The Tragedy of Japan*, suggested that the Emperor and other Japanese leaders were "war criminals." After pressure by the Japanese foreign minister the film was banned by GHQ. Newspaper stories that criticize the United States are regarded as biased and hence in violation of the censorship code. But stories that portray Roosevelt's ally, Stalin, as a ruthless, scheming dictator are considered objective reporting, and are printed. One liberal Japanese newspaper man told me that the censorship today is worse than under Tojo.

On the subject of labor and the "working man," MacArthur exceeds his usual eloquence. He believes in the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively providing their unions are "democratic." However, according to him unions that engage in political action, advocate labor-management committees, participate in demonstrations and/or are led by Communists or genuine progressives are not "democratic." He has used every possible method of crushing these unions.

His offensive against the labor movement was launched dramatically on the eve of the May Day demonstration in 1946. MacArthur announced in a cryptic one-paragraph press release that in connection with the "Communist" parade a "plot" had been discovered to assassinate him. A few hours before the statement was released a liberal officer in GHQ tried to get the wording changed. He pointed out that the celebration was not "Communist"—that at least half of the participants would be non-Communist or even anti-Communist. The release was held up and the information hastily relayed to MacArthur's Chief of Staff. But the story was released without any changes.

Tokyo correspondents tried to follow up the story but GHQ officials brusquely refused to give them any additional information. More than a year has elapsed since then. But the Japanese police, who know the where-

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abouts of almost every individual in the country, have never been able to locate the "assassin." The truth is, of course, that there was no assassin to begin with. Weeks before MacArthur's headquarters had picked up a vague rumor of a "plot"—the kind of rumor which is always floating around Japan—but had classified the information as "unreliable." The rumor was resurrected for the sole purpose of wrecking the May Day demonstration.

After that the anti-labor offensive gained momentum. A statement was issued warning against mass demonstrations. A reactionary labor relations act, drafted largely by MacArthur's headquarters, was rushed through the Japanese Diet. The GHQ-controlled radio network cut down labor's time on the air.

One of the most serious blows at the militant unions was the banning of what was called the "production control" movement. After the war ended, the Japanese capitalists went on a sit-down strike. To stimulate production, the militant unions demanded—and succeeded in winning—the formation of labor-management committees to direct the factories. Production boomed.

According to MacArthur's headquarters, however, this was "undemocratic." George Atcheson, Jr., his deputy on the Allied Council, soberly declared it was "practical confiscation of property without due recompense." By a strange coincidence, the Japanese government had exactly the same opinion on the subject, and in June, 1946, labor-management committees were declared illegal.

Pamphlets prepared by MacArthur's "labor" division gravely inform the Japanese that in "democratic" countries trade unions do not engage in politics and, to make the point perfectly clear, they suggest pointedly that unions which do engage in political action may forfeit their rights under the labor laws.

THE climax of the anti-labor campaign occurred last February when MacArthur banned a general strike. About 3,000,000 workers were prepared to walk out when GHQ called it off a few hours before the strike deadline. MacArthur compared the strike leaders with Tojo and the fascists, and bluntly threatened to cut off food supplies to the country if his order was not carried out.

Amen.

MacArthur waited until shortly before the election in April to play his two trump cards. The first was his proposal to withdraw American troops from the country because the present government was "democratic." His statement implied that the offer would be withdrawn if a left-wing government were elected. Coming just before the election this was tantamount to telling the Japanese to elect MacArthur's kind of government or face the prospect of having American troops occupy their country indefinitely.

The other trick was even more brazen: at the last moment MacArthur permitted the government to cut up the election districts and scrap the proportional representation system. This last-minute gerrymandering weighted the election heavily in favor of the big conservative parties. In a real system of proportional representation the Communists would have won about eighteen seats in the Diet; as it was, they won four.

Among many in the United States, however, the recent election is regarded as final evidence of MacArthur's liberalism. The Socialists emerged as the leading party in the Diet with 143 seats. In May a Socialist prime minister was chosen to head the government—the first Socialist to hold this high office in the history of the country. However, MacArthur, who could never be regarded as an advocate of socialism, was singularly unworried, and shortly after the election he issued a statement welcoming the new prime minister.

The new prime minister is Tetsu Katayama, a lawyer who was active in the Socialist Party before the war. His record during the war is obscure. The real boss of the new cabinet, however, is not Katayama but Suchiro Nishio, a short, tough trade-union leader from Osaka. Nishio is chief secretary of the Socialist Party and minister without portfolio in the new government.

Nishio, in my opinion, is one of the most dangerous men in Japan today. A real "strong-man" type, he is shrewd, and a demagogic orator. He was a Socialist before the war but, like most right-wing Socialists, sold out to the militarists. "Shed blood for your country to bring the Greater East Asia War to a successful conclusion," he declared in a campaign statement when he was running for the Diet in 1942. In that speech he stressed his loyalty to Tojo. He was also active in organizing the Industrial Patriotic Association, the equivalent of the Nazi Labor Front.

Other leaders of the new government also collaborated with the militarists: Hitoshi Ashida, the new foreign minister and head of the so-called Democratic Party, was a militarist diplomat and one of Tojo's ace propagandists; Rikizo Hirano, the new Socialist Minister of Agriculture, was formerly one of the heads of Japan's National Socialist Party. The new Diet is also filled with war criminals. Komakichi Matsuoka, speaker of the Diet, was one of the organizers of the Japan Labor Policy Association, also a wartime labor front organization. When he ran for the Diet in 1942 he was endorsed by Shumei Okawa, who was the chief philosopher of Japanese militarism and is now on trial with Tojo. Matsuoka's "deep racial pride and nationalist ideas coincide with my conception of the Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," Okawa

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declared during the war. Shigeru Yoshida, leader of the new Liberal Party, which holds 133 seats in the Diet, is a member of the monopolist Mitsui family and was the ambassador to London during the militarist regime. The examples could be multiplied endlessly.

WHEN the war ended, the labor movement was dead. The trade unions had been replaced by a government-controlled labor-front organization. The apparatus of the Communist Party was almost completely shattered. All of its leaders were in jail, in exile, or dead.

The Japanese, however, were different from the Germans. Most of the people did not like the militarists; they were tired of fighting; they were hungry. Underneath the placid acceptance of the militarist regime was a deep anger and resentment.

The first strike took place, only a month after the war ended, on the *Yomiuri Hochi*, the largest newspaper in the country. The workers, in addition to wage increases, made two other demands: that the president of the company be ousted because of his "war responsibility" and that a labor-management committee be formed to direct the company. The strikers didn't know much about trade unions, but they were militant and enthusiastic and they learned as they went along. Later they took over the paper, denouncing the president in the columns of his own publication. The strike was long and bitter. Despite pressure from GHQ the strikers won most of their demands. After the success of the *Yomiuri* strike, the movement for "production control" spread like wildfire. Labor-management committees were formed on many other newspapers, in the coal-mining industry and many other industries until the movement was outlawed last summer.

Today more than eighty percent of Japanese workers are organized. There are two main federations—the Congress of Industrial Unions and the National Federation of Labor. The former corresponds roughly to the CIO and is the larger of the two. It has 1,700,000 members. The Federation, controlled by the Socialist Party, corresponds to the AFL and has 1,100,000 members. Other workers are organized into four smaller federations. A committee representing all of the unions is now trying to work out a plan for labor unity.

Although the Communists have only four seats in the Diet, they play a leading role in the life of the country. In the recent election they polled 875,000 votes. Their newspaper, *Red Banner*, which is published three times a week, has a circulation of almost 500,000. A number of other daily papers, despite pressure from MacArthur, reflect the Communist viewpoint. Many of the big trade unions are led by Communists; in last week's election of new officers for the CIU it was reported that Communists won the posts of vice-chairman and secretary-general. Even reactionary officers in GHQ grudgingly admit the party is the most energetic group in the country and that it is one of the few organizations that has ever come up to GHQ with a concrete program.

Kyuichi Tokuda, general secretary of the Communist Party, spent eighteen years in solitary confinement. He is a slim, bald lawyer in his middle fifties. He sleeps only about four hours a day, is a powerful speaker and has an enormous amount of energy. The day he was released from jail he marched in a demonstration, spoke at a Communist rally and helped to draft the party program. Today, in addition to being secretary of the party, he is also one of the four Communist members of the Diet.

The Communist Party program calls for abolition of the Emperor system, stern punishment for war criminals, confiscation of the large trusts and feudal estates, elimination of fascists from the government and establishment of a broad social security system. The Socialist Party leaders have refused to cooperate with the Communists, but a united front has been established with left-wing Socialists in many local areas.

THE steps that must be taken to convert Japan from a militarist to a democratic state are described in the Potsdam Declaration and in a series of policy directives issued by Washington shortly after the war ended. These directives were drawn up while Washington was still under the influence of Roosevelt's liberal foreign policy. They provide for purging the fascists, breaking the power of the monopolists, encouraging the growth of trade unions and a number of other sweeping reforms.

If these directives were carried out to the letter the question of a "short"

ON THE FIFTH DAY

By Martha Millet

On the fifth day the tapping died away
And a man was left to die alone.
Failing the signals from the entombed man
Their search was given up as vain.
They could not tear the angry mine apart
The way it had been sucked back into earth.
But if they could—? No man could last that long,
His body feeding on itself, his breath
Poisoning the pit where he lay trapped.
A beast, once trapped, is ended above ground.
Not so a man. A mighty wave of earth
Flung back upon itself, keeps dying fury,
Recollection, fear, in solitary midnight.
The widow beats upon the barrier earth,
The children whimper under neighbors' hands.

No burying will be here. The job is done.
Five days they burrowed through the wreck; five days.
The earth rose up and swallowed all their work.
Useless now to toil on. Tools they left
Kept imprints of their sweat. Their terrible eyes
Went blind inside their skulls. They told the news.

Some men find timber dear and miners cheap.
Their women never flail and curse the earth
For a last sight of them.
The orphans weep?
The mother, shrunken in black, begs credit?
A matter of chance. It happens. Timber's dear.

The mines go on. The men descend the shaft.
This day they leave behind, will stars rise for them?

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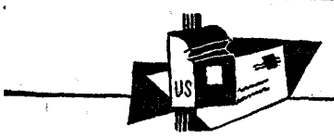
or "long" occupation of Japan would show itself to be irrelevant. It's what Washington does while American troops are in Japan that is important. American troops can be cleared out very quickly if the power of Japan's oppressors is completely broken. If that power remains untouched and only superficial changes are made, such as those MacArthur is making, the occupation can continue forever and the country will not be closer to genuine democracy than it is now.

The Japanese fascists are, of course, delighted by MacArthur's policies. No doubt they have been elated too over the American directive to build up the German Ruhr. It indicates to them that they have much to hope for. They watch German developments with great care for they know that whatever helps German big business will help them too. Washington's call for an eleven-nation preliminary peace conference on Japan must have also given the Japanese fascists as much pleasure as the American announcement on Germany. In this peace conference call the State Department made it clear that it will by-pass the Potsdam agreement for big power settlement of the Japanese treaty and that the Department is ready to violate the rules of the Far Eastern Commission established by the Moscow Conference of December, 1945. There it was agreed that the commission may take action by less than unanimous vote "provided that action shall have the concurrence of at least a majority of all representatives [there are eleven countries on the commission] including the representatives of the four following powers: United States, United Kingdom, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and China." Now the State Department makes it clear that despite prior agreement it will not observe the big power unanimity rule—or the veto procedure, as it is commonly called.

The Japanese monopolists have not given up their dreams for another "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." They see clearly the logic of the Truman Doctrine and its application in Japan by MacArthur. They are quite confident that Washington will eventually rearm Japan. Many of them speak openly of this possibility. Washington's policy is, therefore, mainly a danger to our own security. The Japanese dagger the Truman doctrinaires are pointing at Russia may some day be pointed at us. It's an old fascist custom.

mail call



A South African View

TO NEW MASSES: During the war, under Roosevelt's inspired leadership, countless millions overseas developed a high regard for the US coupled with admiration for her remarkable war efforts and sympathy for many of the problems which beset your multi-national state. We even began to believe that there was a special sort of "American way of life" which might be of value to those fighting their way toward democracy. Millions who were, like myself, brought up to regard the Americans as a brash and *nouveau riche* nation began to develop sincere friendship, and did all we could to make known to all the progressive actions of the US. We expected that the US would play a major part in the postwar era in rebuilding the shattered world on democratic lines.

A couple of years of Truman, Byrnes, Vandenberg and company have undone nearly all this hard-won goodwill. Millions now regard the US as the main menace to their future freedom—even to their future existence. We think that the possession of the atom bomb, plus the vastest accumulation of wealth the world has ever seen, has gone to the heads of the cartelists who dominate US politics.

The undignified and ludicrous antics of your Committee on Un-American Activities, the anti-labor laws, the current campaign to outlaw the Communist Party, tend to make America ridiculous in the eyes of the world. This makes even those who sympathize with the anti-Soviet line of the present US government also somewhat anti-American, because your dollar-imperialists and atomaniacs use the crudest methods to advertise their intentions, and create uneasiness among even those whom they seek to convince.

In our view, the American man-in-the-street holds in his hands the key to world peace. If he cannot restrain the reactionaries who lead his country, and prevent them from igniting yet another world holocaust, he is dooming hundreds of millions of innocent non-American citizens to death or oppression. The American people must not allow the great goodwill built up during the war to be dissipated. A truly democratic America, working in harmony with other states inside UN, can bring immense benefits to mankind.

I am conscious of the fact that talk of democracy, etc., does not come best from South Africa. I hasten to assure you that I am one of those who, as a trade unionist and anti-fascist, has fought and condemned South Africa's white herrenvolkism ever since I have been here, one who can in no way be linked with the Smuts type of hypocritical democracy.

E. J. BURFORD.

Johannesburg.

Call for Action

TO NEW MASSES: The initial attack on the Department of Welfare instituted by the New York press last May shocked the field of social work. Although this attack was more vicious and extensive than many of us could foresee, the reaction of social workers, administrators, board members and community groups close to the interests of the people was unhesitant and creditable.

However, our support of decent welfare practices and the program of the Department of Welfare cannot be allowed to dwindle now. The attacks continue in the press with headlines of "luxury assistance"; the investigation by the state is not yet completed. We can expect a weakening of policies unless we speak out for adequate public assistance; unless we expose those forces that hope to deny a decent standard of living to the rising number of relief clients. We urge private social agencies, their administrators and board members to act quickly. Nothing less than a far-reaching public campaign can bring the truth about public assistance needs to the community's attention.

HELEN MANGOLD, *President*
Social Service Employes' Union
RUTH BALTER, *Chairman*
Community Service Committee

New York.

Old Friend

TO NEW MASSES: It was like a breath of fresh air to see NEW MASSES in a bookshop here once more. I had read it every week when in America, and it was like meeting an old friend again.

People ask me here, on the basis of my eleven years in the US, if I think America will go to war against the democratic countries of eastern Europe. In every case I confidently answer no, because I feel that the American people's voices are not mingled with the warmongers of today who, prior to the war, were shipping supplies to Germany and Italy and to Japan to carry on a robber war against China. In those days the real American people fought back

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and I am confident they are much stronger today. Once in a while, even above the din of the warmongers, we hear the sound of picks, shovels, hammers and spades being thrown down as in the case of the recent strikes against the slave bills. It's a healthy sound and I trust it will get louder and louder until America belongs to its people.

Good luck, friends, in the grand work you are carrying on. Our lads who died in Spain and in World War II didn't die so that other Hitlers might rise.

P. McLAUGHLIN
Former member, Tom Mooney MG Co.
Lincoln Battalion, International Brigade.
Birmingham, Eng.

Family Problem

TO NEW MASSES: I am writing you about a question which came up long ago, but which I believe is as valid today as it was then.

Some time ago, as you remember, there was an item in the newspaper which told of a couple who were divorced because the wife was a Communist. I am not a Communist but have been greatly enriched by reading your literature and taking your courses.

If it has not done anything else it has helped me to understand my place in society and has helped me firmly to take my rightful stand as a wife and mother. It has helped me stand up against my husband with all his male chauvinism and his seemingly oh-so-reasonable arguments. This I would definitely not have been able to do simply out of my own head. Did I not have this background of reading derived from your literature, arguments would end for me in frustration in which I would be the loser, because my husband has a highly cultural professional fund to draw upon with all the logic for his defense which flows from it. Other women would win the battle by dissolving in tears, which really gives no lasting satisfaction—not to her, certainly not to the husband, who feels frustrated and eventually cheated. To the children in the family it is a bad example on which to base a pattern of living for their own future families. It has not shown them a way to resolve their difficulties in a democratic self-respecting way in which all feel justly treated. And for a healthy well-adjusted life is this not the most important factor? There is still another way for such a situation to end and that is for husband and wife to get into quarrels that, piled one on top of the other, can lead only to disaster in one form or another.

How then can such enlightenment lead to divorce? Even those of us who have felt they have the best of husbands have learned so much that it can but benefit them and I am thinking more of the children upon whom it can have only the best and sanest and healthiest effect, and that is the criterion, after all.

MARTHA REED.
Jamaica, L. I.

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

They say that some of his supporters are swinging away from Dewey because of his refusal to commit himself publicly on anything. He's been sitting on the fence so long that it's beginning to give everyone else a pain.

●

Nothing seems as inevitable these days as death and tax-cut bills.

●

Representative Clare Hoffman has no pockets in his suits so he can keep his hands out of his pockets while making speeches. Many Congressmen avoid this habit by always keeping one hand in the public's pocket.

●

Taft is expected to become an "announced" candidate for President in a few weeks. He'll make the announcement himself if he isn't out of breath from his unofficial running.

●

Consistent with his political thinking Taft will probably run backwards for President.

●

Movie Czar Eric Johnston is being boomed as the other half of the Dewey ticket. To the very last Johnston will have failed to improve the quality of double features.

●

At least Dewey won't be known as a man who played second fiddle for the Czar.

●

It has been revealed that Congressmen give all their loud ties to a Capitol elevator man. All that is needed now is a way to dispose of loud Congressmen.

●

Lady Iris Mountbatten has been asked to leave the country after cashing a few checks. She and her checks are being bounced together.

DILLY **by Sam Pollach**

"Why don't we write Mr. Hearst and ask him what we CAN paint?"

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HOLLYWOOD LETTER

by N. A. Daniels

Hollywood.

IT IS obviously impossible to cover in the space of one page the unique conference held here at the Beverly Hills Hotel from July 9 to July 13. It was, literally, the first conference against thought control in American history. Out of it will come a national conference against thought control, to be held in Philadelphia in September under the auspices of the Arts, Sciences and Professions Council of the Progressive Citizens of America.

The papers and reports presented in Beverly Hills will be published and, within the next few months, will achieve wide circulation throughout the United States. The caliber of these reports can only be indicated here by reference to the names of the people who prepared and delivered them. Among writers we heard from Donald Ogden Stewart, Albert Maltz, Norman Corwin, John Howard Lawson, Howard Koch, George Tabori, Philip Stevenson, Millen Brand, Arthur Laurents, Arnaud d'Usseau, George Sklar, Carey McWilliams. Actors of the stature of Vincent Price, Lee Cobb, Morris Carnovsky, Selena Royle, Howard da Silva, Hume Cronyn, Paul Henried, Alexander Knox, Anne Revere and others traced the history of the performer and developed the relationship between his craft and the society in which he lives.

The conference set out to explore in as factual, as scientific and objective a manner as possible the growing menace of thought control which is being applied throughout America as we enter the new period of alarums on land, sea and in the air. An astonishing amount of evidence from every field of cultural endeavor was exposed—more or less successful efforts to impose upon the majority of Americans the thought-processes, the prejudices, the blindness and the ignorance of that gilded minority which controls our media of communication.

Throughout the conference two tendencies in the field of thought control were demonstrated to be responsible for the stifling of original and progressive thinking in all fields: the political control exerted by a "bipartisan" minority and the economic control which stems from the increasing monopolization of the media of mass communication. More and more, it was shown, the motion picture, the theater, the book, the radio show or commentator, science and education, the press, health and medicine, the law and the fine arts, are coming into the hands of the monopolists and their missionaries.

Doctors told of the control exercised by the American Medical Association and the leading pharmaceutical manufacturers in the country over the practice of medicine and medical research. Lawyers exposed the restraints upon the legal profession to be found in the American Bar Association, and the leading-reins that were held upon the press by its big-business character. The motion picture industry, it was adequately demonstrated, is one of the greatest monopolies in the land and the prejudices of its owners are the ideas which motion pictures more and more express. The fine arts are even now passing under the control of State Department policy that can dare to suppress an international exhibition of American art. No musical performer, it was shown, can be booked into any major house in the land unless he is "represented" by one of two enormous "artists' representatives." Artists, musicians, performers, writers, doctors, lawyers who fail to "conform" to the passions and prejudices of the "leaders" of their respective professions are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve expression. Meeting halls are more and more being denied to those who believe that this country can be a better, more abundant America than it now is. The film writer is intimidated into self-censorship by fear of a lost job; the dramatist is finding his work coming under the scrutiny of un-American committees, the novelist is finding his books banned in public schools and libraries and faces arrest when he is a member of an organization devoted to the welfare of anti-fascist refugees.

THIS is necessarily a surface sketch of the scores of papers presented at the conference. Every paper was impressively documented. These were people who knew their field and its history from A to Z and back again. They were full of their material; they found it almost impossible to limit that material to the physical needs of such a conference; they overflowed.

The audience also overflowed. Every meeting, both opening and closing sessions, every panel discussion, was jammed to the doors despite the heat and the uncomfortable seating arrangements. Hundreds were turned away.

Addresses which properly linked the anti-cultural aspects of current ruling policy with its foreign and domestic political counterparts were delivered by the national co-chairman of PCA, Robert W. Kenny, by Hugh DeLacy and others. Resolutions which demonstrated the membership's growing understanding of the interrelationship between culture and politics were propounded and will have wide repercussion. Among them were demands upon President Truman for repudiation of the Thomas-Rankin committee and for abolition of the so-called loyalty tests. International free exchange of scholars, scientists and artists was demanded. A Federal Bureau of Fine Arts was proposed and will be worked for.

There will be a weekly nation-wide PCA-ASP radio broadcast; a national weekly publication that will grow into a national daily—a truly free press. A sort of cultural *Consumers' Guide* will be published, to examine and document the daily output in every field of the arts, sciences and professions, and inform the public upon its tendencies—whether toward the expansion of the democratic process or its opposite. Legislation will be initiated that would make it legally binding upon the press not only to accept advertisements from anyone, regardless of race, creed, color or political complexion, but to force newspapers to throw open their columns, free-of-charge, to all points of view without discrimination of any kind.

The Philadelphia conference against thought control will open on the anniversary of the Bill of Rights. It will parallel the "Freedom Train" which Attorney General Tom Clark is going to send throughout the country. It will be followed by a caravan of leading artists, scientists and professionals, who will tour the country, speaking on this subject and urging twentieth century solutions for twentieth century problems. Robert Kenny coined a wonderful slogan against the reactionaries when he said, "If you don't like this century, go back to the one you came from."

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review and comment

D'USSEAU ON MAXWELL ANDERSON

OFF BROADWAY: Essays About the Theater, *by Maxwell Anderson. William Sloan Associates.* $2.50.

WITH the exception of Eugene O'Neill, Maxwell Anderson is our most ambitious playwright. In twenty years he has written more than twenty-five plays, diversified in theme and treatment, varied in time and background. He has written of war, the backwash of war, revolution, social injustice, political corruption; he has written of royalty, of the middle class and of the proletariat; he has written sometimes in prose, sometimes in pentameter and sometimes to the accompaniment of music. He has won numerous prizes and brought a seriousness and high-mindedness to his work that has been rare, and of which it has become a commonplace to say the theater stands in particular need today. For this reason the essays which have been brought together in this book are deserving of attention.

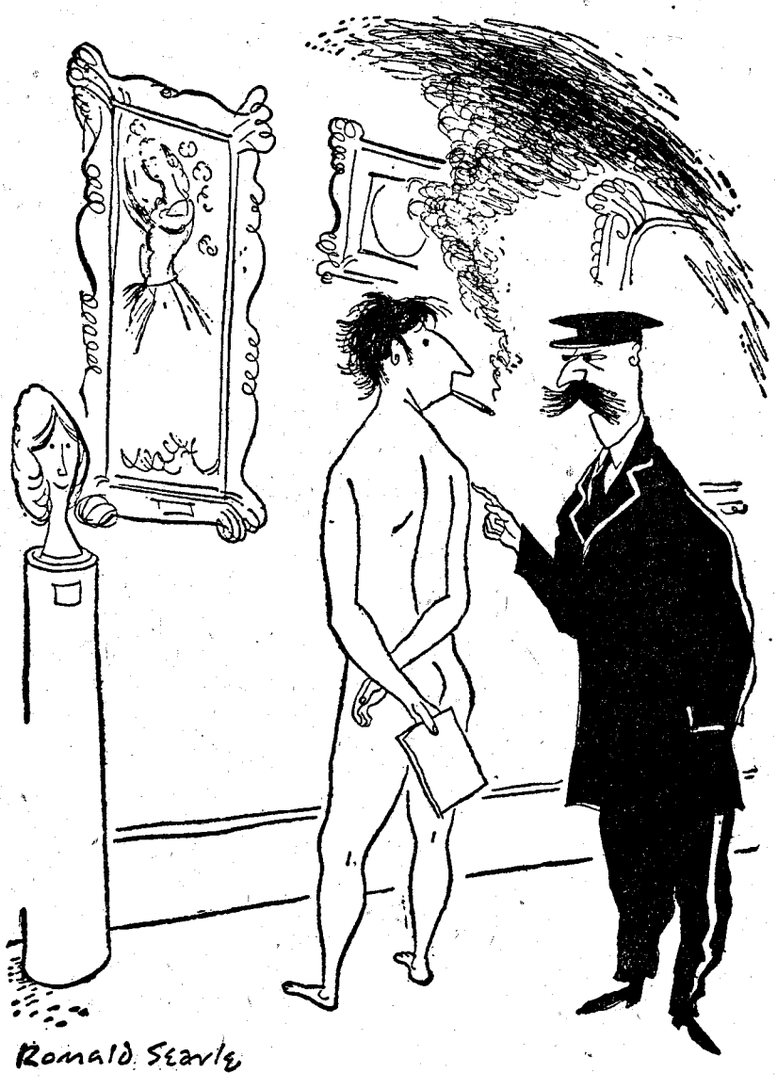
There are ten essays in all and they include Anderson's joust with the critics of a couple of seasons back; a tribute to Shaw on the occasion of Shaw's ninetieth birthday; discussions of poetry in the theater and the creative writer's stake in the theater in contrast to Hollywood's monopoly on talent; and several pieces which take up from different angles the important role of the theater in our unsettled society.

Roughly, the material divides itself into two categories: Anderson's ideas as a professional worker in the theater, and his opinions as a citizen and thinker. Both acquaint us with the source of his considerable energy and devotion. They also reveal the reasons for his many deficiencies, and explain why a number of other playwrights, who have attempted less, have given us so much more.

As a professional playwright, certain things Anderson has to say cannot be questioned. It cannot be stated too often what an inordinate influence the New York critics have over the fate of a play; Anderson makes us see the practical problems with which the playwright is presented during production, and which he must resolve through conscious compromise; and we must agree with him that there are certain rules about putting a play together which Aristotle and others have enunciated and which it does not do for the playwright to violate.

But certain other ideas Anderson has about the theater must be challenged, and sharply. In discussing poetry in the theater, he confuses the meaning of the words "poetry" and "verse." Are Synge or O'Casey any less poetic because they don't formally employ rhyme and meter and start each line with a capital letter? Anderson also ignores the dilemma of the poet outside the theater—a failure, to my mind, which must necessarily make his ideas on the subject incomplete. Finally, he makes an arbitrary separation between poetry and science, setting forth the notion that science, because of its celebration of fact and its lack of mysticism, is anti-poetical. Has he never read, among others, Shelley?

He declared that the theater has become his religion, and that it is a re-



"I'm sorry, sir—there's no smoking in the museum." A warm-weather note from "Les Lettres Francaises," French weekly.

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ligion, despite its present neglect, which will survive all others. One respects his piety, but one cannot but be conscious of its amorphous character. Anderson's distrust of fact, his distaste for information (which he believes must inevitably give a work a journalistic stamp), his dependence alone upon emotion—all these have made him blind to those forces which are today wrecking his cathedral.

In his plays, Anderson's best characters are those upon whom he doesn't place very much importance, whom he seems to create in one writing; they are sharp, real and unpretentious in their vitality and function. His poorest characters are those with immortal longings. The same can be said about his professional tenets: those he doesn't inflate give the reader the most; those he tries to make significant are imprecise and pretentious.

If his notions about the theater are flabby, his notions as a citizen and thinker are doubly so. Where the one disappoints, the other irritates. Perhaps, as Anderson himself suggests, it is because he has no mind for theory; perhaps it is because there is a point at which confusion becomes as much a menace to society as outright malevolence.

He declares, for example, his faith is in democracy. But he speaks of democracy so loosely, so generally, as to indicate that it is democracy's fecundity and nothing more which he believes in, just as he would be bound to believe in protoplasm. He sees democracy, and more specifically bourgeois democracy, as something static and absolute, not something growing and changing and in constant need of redefining, and in these hysterical days, of defending. He also considers freedom. But here again he so vaguely defines his concept that one is reminded of the law which permits both the rich and the poor to sleep under the bridge. It also leads him to remarks that can only be compared to the manifestoes of the National Association of Manufacturers. Anderson, I'm sure, would not like to consider himself a spokesman for that organization, but what are we to think when he begins to use its concepts of democracy and freedom to attack the social gains for which the people of the world are today struggling?

At one time the theater's debt to Anderson was considerable. New frontiers were established by *What Price Glory* and several other plays of his. Twenty years ago he brought a welcome vitality into the theater, but today that quality has gone out of his work and his thinking.

One never asks that the playwright be prophet or propagandist, but one does ask that he present his characters and ideas with clarity. Anderson has not done so for a long time in his plays, nor in the less exacting form of these essays.

ARNAUD D'USSEAU.

A Farmer Takes a Trip

JUST TELL THE TRUTH, *by John Strohm. Scribner's. $3.50.*

JOHN STROHM, president of the American Agricultural Editors' Association in 1946, and former managing editor of *Prairie Farmer*, says in the foreword to his book, "I've heard of the Iron Curtain, but as far as I'm personally concerned, I have yet to bump into it." Strohm "travelled freely more than 4,000 miles in the Soviet Union . . . visited collective farms unescorted . . . talked with workers . . . talked freely with the people on their farms, in their markets and in their homes . . . and even carried four cameras." The only thing ever said to him about what he should write came from Soviet Minister of Agriculture Benedictov, who remarked, "Naturally, we hope you will just tell the truth!"

In addition to a thoroughly readable account of his trips to collective farms and factories, and conversations with representative members of the Soviet people, Strohm presents factual information about conditions in the Soviet Union such as prices, living standards, attitudes toward America and international problems.

An absorbing chapter is the one about Nikolai Tsitsin, leading Soviet agricultural scientist. Here Strohm describes the high priority given Soviet scientists and their work and tells of Tsitsin's development of perennial wheat, so important in areas where it is either too hot or too cold to grow ordinary wheat. He describes the growing of tea in the Kuban where the temperature falls to eleven degrees below zero; of tobacco and sugar beets north of the Arctic circle. One learns that the ACS (Bogomoletz) serum increases the milk of cows sixty-five percent, increases the weight of pigs twenty percent over a short period, and turns non-laying hens into cackling producers.

In other chapters, Strohm deals

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with the problems faced by the Soviet people in reconstructing their economy. Among other handicaps, the lack of machinery is one of the greatest. The author was told by a Ukrainian farmer: "Before the war, ninety percent of the grain in this section was cut by machine. This year more than half of it will be cut by hand." He learned that of the first twenty million acres of grain harvested in the Soviet Union in 1946, only seventeen percent had been cut by combines. Horsepower has been replaced by men, women and cows. But with this, and by virtue of planning and hard work, the Soviet Union harvested in 1946 the biggest grain crop since before the war. Agricultural and industrial production is climbing, but the handicaps of a war-ravaged land are tremendous indeed.

The book's deficiencies appear chiefly in the chapter on the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. While most of the book is documented either with fact or with conversation with Soviet citizens, in this chapter Strohm introduces a mythical character, "the foreign observer," who uses such words as "regimentation," "concentration camps," "forced laborers," "exiles," in criticism of that party. Strohm presents no proof to substantiate these charges and one must take them as symptoms of the anti-Communist disease which afflicts so many American observers. Also, because the Communist Party is such a vital part of Soviet life, it would have been pertinent for Strohm to have given the reader some idea as to why it is so important and why it is held in such great esteem.

Strohm also makes the mistake of converting rubles into dollars thereby giving an inaccurate estimate of the Soviet citizen's real income. The uninformed reader may attempt to compare these incomes with those of American workers and farmers. These comparisons are invalid because many items which go into an American worker's or farmer's budget as items of expense—such as medical care—are either free or available at nominal cost in the USSR.

Nevertheless this is a valuable book. From it the reader will appreciate the fact that the Soviet people have a deep feeling of friendship for the American people as well as a deep appreciation of American aid during and after the war, and a great desire for greater cultural exchange. To put it in the author's final words: "There remains a fund of goodwill toward America among the people of the Soviet Union, no less than among the other citizens of the world. In that fact lies America's opportunity and America's challenge."

CONSTANCE STREIT.

Do Not Disturb

INTO THE MAINSTREAM, *by Charles S. Johnson. University of North Carolina Press.* $3.50.

THIS represents a "survey of best practices in race relations in the South" from the Johnsonian viewpoint. The Southern Regional Council, whose board of directors consists overwhelmingly of ministers, professors, lawyers and businessmen dedicated to the gradual implementation of a policy of severely-guarded gradualism, represents, we are assured, the "biggest single development" in Southern race relations. Thus the council gets more pages in this book than the Southern Conference on Human Welfare gets words: similarly the council plus the Boy Scouts are allotted as much space as is the labor movement, though even this work must state that labor organization has represented "the biggest single forward surge of Negroes into the mainstream of American life in the past ten years. . . ."

The maintenance of an ostentatious placidity on the surface of a bubbling lava bed is the essential purpose of many of the allegedly good-will agencies discussed at length in this volume—from the committee made up of carefully selected well-to-do Negroes "advising" the Jackson, Mississippi Chamber of Commerce, to the benevolent San Antonio police chief who is sure "there has never been any racial antagonism" in his cesspool of ghettoism, discrimination and soul-destroying paternalism. The concessions and advances that have been made—some Negro policemen, additional hospital beds, more libraries—have come because of enormous mass pressure. They represent an attempted "new basis of accommodation" (actually not at all new) that Dr. Johnson calls for, one that must not "disturb the present policy of segregation," one that deals with the periphery of the real problems of the Southern people and acts, essentially, as a lightning-rod for the accumulating wrath of those people.

Two other serious limitations of the work must be pointed out: it deals only with the abnormal war years; and it is

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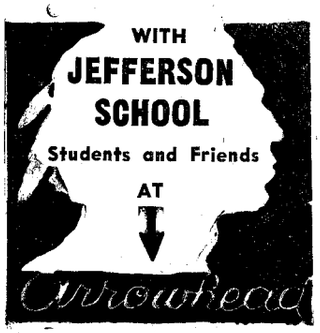

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restricted almost entirely to the urban South. Like so much of the production of Dr. Johnson and his Fisk associates this volume serves as a handy *descriptive* summary of certain largely surface phenomena of the South, but interpretatively it is woefully weak. It made this reviewer think of nothing so much as Army division and regimental "histories" issuing just now in abundance from former public relations officers.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

THEATER

IF THIS seems to be a late day to be reviewing *Happy Birthday,* which has been going for nearly a year, the fault is with the Shubert office. Along with other prejudices characteristic of the offices of monopolies it does not consider NEW MASSES fit to include on its review list. Consequently the honor of a pair of review tickets did not descend upon us until the summer slump descended on the Shuberts. Then, along with third cousins of the ushers, we were admitted to help keep the solitary paying guests in the orchestra from feeling too lonesome.

There isn't much to review in *Happy Birthday* as a play. Anita Loos' passable comedy draws most of its humor from the behavior of a lovesick, spinsterly librarian after alcohol has unhinged her inhibitions. Such little thought as is attempted tries to make the point that morals may be the sour grapes of the repressed and the revenges of the frustrated—revelations that no longer can shake rafters.

Rather than a review I will make this the occasion for some notes on acting. For Helen Hayes' superb performance of the subdued prude who discovers heroes and the good life in a saloon is an example of the kind of acting that provides an artistic evening in the theater despite a mediocre play, just as Ben Jonson's *Volpone* in the Donald Wolfit presentation was an example of a great play sufficing to make an artistic evening despite a mediocre performance.

As a writer, the Broadway protocol which puts the dramatist in last place on posters and playbills has always incited my indignation. That money comes first in our culture is nowhere so blatantly emphasized as in our theater, where top billing in the announcements goes to those who put up the money or find the "angels" to do it—mostly the latter.

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Second place in the billing usually goes to the star or stars of the cast. Acting talent is abundant on Broadway, more abundant than the opportunities it gets to function. Still, the number of those so good that their performance is sufficient by itself to make it an artistic theater evening is small. In the past season, in addition to Helen Hayes I can recall only Ina Claire in *Fatal Weakness*, Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne in *O Mistress Mine* and Ingrid Bergmann in *Joan of Lorraine* for whom a case might be made. And here too there is a limit which even the finest acting cannot transcend. Tallulah Bankhead could not save Cocteau's *The Eagle With Two Heads* from the overdose of boredom induced by the playwright's intellectual pretensions, just as not even Shakespeare could survive the ranting performance given *King Lear* in the Wolfit production.

The ideal seems to be obvious and was illustrated two seasons ago by the visit of Old Vic and last season by the visit of the Gielgud Company, as well as by some of the performances of the American Repertory Theater. The ideal is great acting and great plays combined. And the British experience bears out that of the Russian companies: that great acting is enhanced by repertory ensemble performance.

Repertory theaters are no overnight growths. It took the Old Vic, as it took The Moscow Art Theater, many obscure and trying years before it matured. The American Repertory Theater has made some poor repertory choices. Obviously it has not yet found its stride. But it has a cast of remarkable actors and fine directors. With the whole range of dramatic literature to choose from, it can anticipate, if other considerations do not prevent, a role similar to that of the British companies. No doubt that role would have better assurance if there were a government guarantee such as has stimulated the English theater, which now has thirty operating companies. The government guarantee has not proved a "dole," though it has provided a secure economic underpinning. It is a mistaken idea that government guarantee means operation at a loss: the British and the Russian theaters are more prosperous than the American. They are on so consistently solvent a basis that Broadway with its angels seems chaotically unbusinesslike by comparison.

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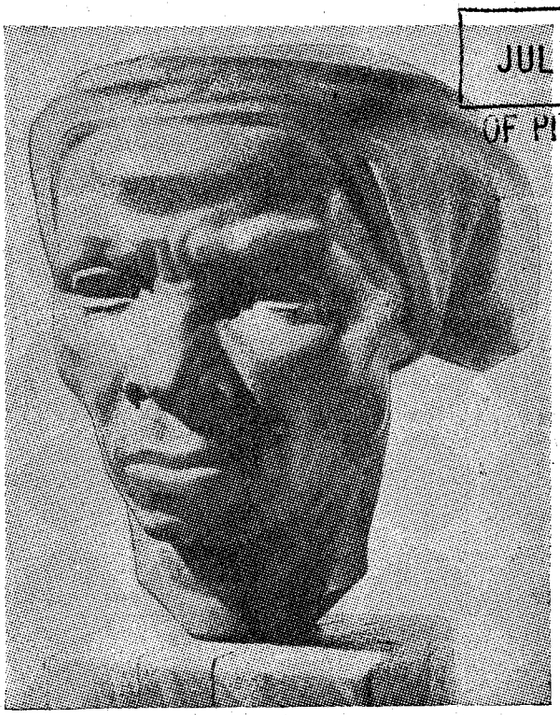

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